

Senate Council
November 19, 2007

The Senate Council met at 3 pm on Monday, November 19, 2007 in 103 Main Building. Below is a record of what transpired. All votes were taken via a show of hands unless indicated otherwise.

Senate Council Chair Kaveh A. Tagavi called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm. He reported that Dembo and Harley would be absent, and Wood and Yanarella would leave early. He moved to announcements.

The nomination period for Senate Council (SC) members began at noon on the 19th, and will continue through noon on Friday, November 30. SC members engaged in a brief discussion on honorary degrees. The Chair then asked Yanarella for an update on the Board of Trustees (BoT) trip to Robinson Forest (RF).

Yanarella reported that he, Dembo and Russ Williams, staff trustee, sent a formal letter to ask if the BoT could visit the site of the commercial logging area of RF. The letter also requested a moratorium on commercial logging until after the BoT made the visit. Eleven BoT members visited RF together – one other member visited separately due to a scheduling conflict. Yanarella stated that the overwhelming feeling was that the most significant questions raised by those opposed to the logging had been satisfactorily answered either during that visit or through materials provided to BoT members. He said trustees had an opportunity to view a section of forest that had been clear-cut a little over 20 years ago, that had since returned to a forested area. He said trustees walked along stream sites where the cutting will take place, at various distances back from the stream. They were given an extensive lecture on the actual methods and precautions that will be taken, for example, to prevent invasive species from invading the cut area. At the end of the tour, trustees were given the opportunity to talk with all the key principals in the experiment itself about what had been discussed. Yanarella said that he used the opportunity to raise questions about some aspects that had concerned him for some time, including the handling of RF trust monies.

Yanarella concluded by saying that to date, he was unaware of any lingering doubts by trustees, as well as noting that no evidence of poor management of RF trust monies had been seen. While trustees did not review extensive, detailed ledgers, they were satisfied that nothing untoward had occurred. He said he believed that those opposed to the logging had framed the issue as a “wilderness versus conservation issue” and on those terms, he believed those opposed had not made a case. He added that he thought the BoT would soon express a fresh view on their September 2004 decision to support the experiment, which would affirm the propriety of proceeding with the experiment of limited logging.

In response to a question from Wood about whether or not it was clear to the BoT in 2004 that there were plans for clear-cutting an experimental plot, Yanarella said that under no circumstances would the plots be clear-cut, which refers to the uprooting and removal of all trees. The experiment would involve two variables – the first involved cutting 15 – 75% of a plot and the other variable involved how far from the stream (50 feet, 100 feet, or 150 feet) cutting would be done. The principal investigators had argued that relatively large areas of forest needed to be used to draw appropriate scientific inferences from the experiment and to establish greater validity and reliability. Yanarella summed up by saying that in 2004, the BoT gave a general blessing to a project that would involve some cutting of some parts of RF for the purpose of developing more rigorous standards for stream-side management.

The Chair then turned to a request from the Office of the President for additional nominees for the Social Sciences Academic Area Advisory Committee. After brief discussion, two names were agreed upon.

Wood asked that the degree list be discussed prior to the discussion on the Provost's "Going Forward" document. No one objected, so the Chair agreed.

4. Additions to UK 2007 December Degree List

Wood engaged the Chair in a discussion on how best to ensure names were appropriately and correctly put on the list of degrees, since she had been unsuccessful in getting the degree type for one student changed. The Chair reiterated that problems and additions needed to be reported to the Office of the Senate Council prior to Senate meetings for the most effective resolutions.

Wood **moved** to approve the additions to the UK December 2007 degree list, on behalf of the elected faculty senators. Yanarella **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** unanimously with six in favor.

2. [Discussion on Provost Subbaswamy's "Going Forward" Document](#)

The Chair acknowledged that SC members were likely already well informed on the agenda item's background. He said that he received two documents from the Provost, one of which was the seven principles. The "[Principles](#)" document had been handed out to senators in the November Senate meeting – it was posted online as part of the day's agenda and also included in the handout. He noted that the Senate had not made any motions about the principles, let alone having held any discussion on them.

The Chair said that Provost Subbaswamy had requested that the SC determine how best to proceed; in addition, if any substantial changes were suggested for the proposed next steps ("Going Forward") or the seven principles, that the Provost be invited to attend a SC meeting for a discussion prior to making such changes. Provost's Liaison Greissman confirmed for the Chair that the Provost's request referred to both documents.

SC members engaged in a lively discussion on the steps suggested in the “Going Forward” document and a handful of changes were suggested. SC members conferred regularly with Greissman during the discussion as to whether the suggested changes would constitute a significant change that needed to be shared with the Provost prior to voting on them. Greissman reiterated a number of times that Provost Subbaswamy readily acknowledged the prerogative of the SC and Senate with respect to USP reform, and that the most the Provost requested was to be included in discussions, not to make final decisions. SC members agreed a number of times that it was very appropriate to ensure the Provost was well informed about any decisions or votes conducted that related to USP reform.

Wood emphasized the need for faculty to be able to submit comments on USP reform prior to any major action on the part of the Senate. The discussion gradually moved to the topic of how best to solicit faculty input; outlets such as additional forums, mass emails, email submissions and channeling comments through senators were all discussed. It was ultimately agreed that a mass email should go to all faculty members to specifically request their input. In addition, Greissman and others discussed how such input would be submitted and received. SC members were largely in agreement that the USP Reform Steering Committee (USPRSC) had largely completed its charge and that the USPRSC was not the appropriate body to receive future comments. Randall suggested that no action be taken until the new joint committee was composed, but the Chair opined that such a future committee should not be given the task of defining general education principles – that authority and responsibility lay with the Senate, who should inform the future joint committee what principles had been decided on.

Discussion on how to solicit input continued. Greissman suggested that the general education website (<http://www.uky.edu/GenEd>) be utilized, since it already contained a treasure trove of UK-related and national documents on revising general education programs. It also already had a mechanism by which comments could be submitted and also posted for public viewing. Greissman noted, though, that the comments currently were sent to his email address from the site. He thought it would be more appropriate for future comments to go to someone not in an administrative position in the Office of the Provost. There was additional discussion.

Piasek suggested that when the mass email was authored, it should include a gentle reminder that mere criticism was not overly helpful – criticism of a certain aspect should also be accompanied by a suggestion. Wood agreed and thought the language should go further and also request a rationale for suggested changes.

SC members then discussed how best to collect the comments and suggestions from faculty that would be received as a result of the mass email. It was more or less understood that the venue would be the GenEd website, but there was more discussion on how to organize the comments and what to do with them.

Greissman suggested that the Senate could appoint its portion of the future joint revision committee, which could incorporate comments and prepare a revised document that could then be used by the entire joint committee as the next point from which to begin further discussions.

As discussion wound down, the Chair asked for a consensus (and received it) that: 1. the SC would vote on the “Going Forward” document and the suggested changes; and 2. a mass email would be sent out to all faculty to solicit input. Greissman requested that a mass email wait until the GenEd website was tweaked to include the Principles document and the comment submission area was modified somewhat. In response to the Chair about whether or not the SC discussion included changes substantive enough to require prior discussion with the Provost, Greissman suggested that the SC proceed as it had been during the course of the meeting, and that the Chair could follow up with the Provost in the coming days so the Provost could determine if the changes were primarily editorial or were large enough to rise to the level of the Provost wanting to be included in such discussions.

Finkel **moved** that the Senate Council tentatively accept the “Going Forward” document as modified with the three suggested changes¹ (First change: “I. Debate ~~the USP Reform Steering Committee’s~~ and ~~adopt by Senate~~ general education principles and adopt a set of general education principles.” Second change: “II.a. translate ~~the each~~ adopted principles ~~into an actual curricular element~~ of a revised general education proposal.” Third change: “II.b. vet thoroughly the modified “Principles of a Revised General Education Curriculum” draft proposal with the campus community.”), conditional upon the Provost not raising any concerns and that if the Provost did have a concern, he would be invited to the next SC meeting during which the “Going Forward” document could be discussed again. Yanarella **seconded**. A **vote** was taken on the motion, which **passed** unanimously. The Chair said he would contact the Provost on Tuesday to talk with him.

3. [SC Officer Elections](#)

The Chair reminded SC members that an election for the chair and vice chair took place every December. He said that after the agenda was posted, he talked with Michael, chair of the Senate’s Rules and Elections Committee (SREC) and asked Michael to preside over the portion of the December 3 meeting during which new officers would be elected.

Michael said that he planned to request that nominations be emailed to him via a ballot he would soon share with SC members.

¹ Strikethrough indicates deleted text and underlining denotes new text.

Greissman spoke up to alert SC members that one individual who was suggested as a nominee for the Social Sciences Academic Area Advisory Committee was not a full professor. The Chair suggested that more names be vetted over the SC listserv – those present concurred.

Randall said that he thought the minutes had not yet been approved. The Chair then turned to the minutes from November 5. He brought to SC members' attention that in those minutes there was a motion and second made, but the individuals who did so could not be identified. SC members recalled that Lesnaw made the motion and suggested passive voice be used for the language regarding the member who seconded the motion. There being no additional comments, the minutes were approved as amended.

The Chair asked Michael if he had a preference regarding which SREC agenda item should be discussed next, since there was limited time left in the meeting. Michael suggesting discussing the Bulletin report.

5. [Bulletin Report for SREC Subcommittee](#)

Michael reported that the purpose of the report being on the SC agenda was to ensure the subcommittee had the endorsement of the SC prior to continuing its efforts. Michael explained that when the SREC was codifying a change to English-language proficiency, he realized that the changed language was not in the *Senate Rules (SR)*, but was rather in the Graduate School Bulletin (GSB). He said that upon further investigation, the *SR* contained a piecemeal attempt to codify rules that have proliferated across campus, which are also codified in the undergraduate and professional student bulletins and other places. The subcommittee thought that if an individual wanted to access a particular piece of information, it should be housed in one of the three major bulletins – undergraduate, graduate and professional. He added that removing specific program-based language would drastically reduce the length of the *SR*. He said that prior to any next efforts to contact college deans, he wanted SC endorsement of the subcommittee's efforts. Michael said an attempt would be made to clean up the *SR* and that when language on admission, promotion, retention and graduation was found that had not been approved by the Senate, it could be sent to the Senate for approval and subsequently kept in the appropriate bulletin, but not in the *SR*.

In conversation with Thelin, Michael noted that the *SR* were intended to describe the overall academic policies of the university, not the specific details, which were left to college faculty. Thelin wondered if there could be a problem with some Graduate School (GS) programs, since the GS was the entity that granted a master's degree, not usually the program itself. He said there could be confusion about the source from which changes should and were emanating.

Michael stated that the Undergraduate Bulletin (UGB) should contain brief descriptions of graduate degrees to aid students in academic planning, but that the bulk of the descriptive language for graduate degrees should be in the GS Bulletin. He added that other than that of the College of Law, he had trouble finding bulletins for other professional colleges. It would be most appropriate for a student to be able to look to the GSB, the UGB, a professional college bulletin or the Code of Student Conduct to answer any question.

Finkel opined that it was a good idea and synopsized Michael's comments by saying that the subcommittee would endeavor to identify a small set of acceptable places where rules would appear and try to keep rules from appearing in more than one location. He thought that getting a handle on what had been approved when and by whom would be difficult to do, but that if approval was not easily ascertained, it would need to be newly approved.

Michael said that the final product would be a purging of the *SR* and addition of language to outline the process and principles of where to find various pieces of information. He said that a final step could be an omnibus approval of various rules. In response to a comment from Finkel about ensuring colleges do not invent rules without proper approval, Michael said that the *SR* should be modified to state that new rules could not be created without express Senate approval.

After additional comments by various attendees, the Chair stated his observation that the sentiment of the SC was endorsement of the undertaking by the SREC's subcommittee. Finkel added that even getting halfway through the undertaking would be a great help.

The Chair suggested that due to the time, agenda item number six should be postponed and that adjournment would be appropriate. Thus, the meeting was adjourned at 4:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kaveh A. Tagavi,
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Aken, Michael, Piascik, Randall, Tagavi, Thelin, Wood and Yanarella.

Provost's Liaison present: Greissman.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on Wednesday, November 21, 2007.